



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, III CORPS AND FORT HOOD
FORT HOOD, TEXAS 76544-5040

AFZF-GA-SAFE

17 DEC 2001

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Use of Portable Field Space Heaters

1. References.

a. TM 10-4500-200-13, (w/changes 1-19), Heaters Space: Radiant Type Portable, 30 Nov 94.

b. TM 9-4520-257-12 & P, Operator's and Unit Maintenance Manual, Heater, Space, Radiant, Large (H-45), (Type I, Solid Fuel) (NSN 4520-01-354-1191) (Type II, Liquid Fuel) (NSN 4520-01-329-3451), 17 Sep 92.

c. AR 600-55, Motor Vehicle and Equipment Operator Selection, Training, Testing, and Licensing, 31 Dec 93.

d. FORSCOM Commander Message, AFPI-SO, Safety Policy for the Tactical Use of Portable Space Heaters, 10 Dec 01.

e. Memo, III Corps, AFZF-GA-SAFE, Use of Portable Field Space Heaters, 30 Nov 01.

2. On 30 Nov 01, I published a policy regarding the use of portable field space heaters (ref e). The intent of the policy was to inform commanders of the dangers associated with unvented commercial heaters and to prescribe mitigations regarding the continued use of these extremely dangerous devices. This policy revises the guidance associated with that 30 November policy and as such supersedes it.

3. Improperly operated and nonstandard field space heaters have historically posed safety and health hazards. Carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide emissions, suffocation, fires, and explosions are potential hazards associated with these heaters and have resulted in numerous injuries, fatalities, and equipment damage in the past. Risk assessments and common sense dictate that leaders ensure their soldiers use only standard/safe space heaters.

4. Commercial-type space heaters (kerosene, propane, Coleman, etc.) are not vented and therefore pose serious risk of death to soldiers sleeping in buildings, rooms, or tents

AFZF-GA-SAFE

SUBJECT: Use of Portable Field Space Heaters

heated with them. For that reason, only authorized portable space heaters will be used, except as noted below. New purchases of commercial, nonstandard, unvented space heaters are prohibited.

5. The only exceptions for using commercial-type unvented space heaters is for mission-critical operations as outlined below:

a. This exception is on a case-by-case basis only for nonstandard, unvented, commercial heaters that are currently on hand and applies only to the winter of 2001, through 30 April 2002. No exceptions for the use of non-standard commercial heaters will be authorized beyond 30 April 2002.

b. Such heaters must meet the requirements of national consensus organizations, such as Underwriter's Laboratories, American National Standards Institute, International Standards Organization, or the National Fire Protection Association.

c. The first General Officer (GO) in the unit's chain of command (COC) will approve the use of nonstandard heaters for mission-critical operations only. This authority will not be delegated.

d. The requesting unit will prepare and forward to the first GO in the COC a risk assessment outlining positive control measures. The risk assessment control measures will be briefed to all applicable personnel, along with the safety considerations in paragraph 6, below.

e. The nonstandard heaters approved by the first GO in the COC must be fully operational and will not be used in sleeping tents and other areas where soldiers sleep. Of special concern are to not use unvented heaters in sleeping tents that are made of air-tight material that does not "breathe," such as the soldier crew tent (SCT). These types of approved nonstandard heaters can be used with GO approval per manufacturers instructions where soldiers are awake and performing duties in support of operations, such as in TOCs. Such heaters are prohibited in enclosed areas, i.e., CONEXs, military vans, and buildings, unless adequate ventilation is provided. Adequate and continuous ventilation are required to avoid unnecessary health risks.

6. The old M1941 potbelly and M1950 Yukon heaters are being phased out of the Army system. They are no longer manufactured and limited spare parts are available. These heaters pose known safety and health hazards. Commanders are directed to purchase the new family of Army space heaters in FY02 per CTA limits, with unit funds, to replace the M1941 and M1950 heaters. New Army space heaters will be given top priority when using year-end funds for this purpose. The following space heaters are the new family of Army heaters: H-45 Space Heater,

AFZF-GA-SAFE

SUBJECT: Use of Portable Field Space Heaters

Space Heater Convective (SHC), Space Heater Small (SS), and the Space Heater Artic (SHA). Specifications, cost, and ordering information are found at the U.S. Army Soldier Biological and Chemical Command web site: <http://www.sbccom.army.mil/products/field/index.htm>.

7. The following safety considerations apply to the use of all field heaters:

a. All heaters will be set up and operated only by personnel who are trained, tested, and licensed IAW AR 600-55. Heaters will not be operated while unattended.

b. Heaters will be placed on a flat level surface, with 4 feet of clearance from flammable/combustible materials. First-line leaders must conduct inspections and risk assessments of the heater locations and operation to ensure applicable standards/unit SOPs are followed.

c. Only authorized fuels per operator manual will be used. Fuel substitution and mixing of different fuels are potentially dangerous and can cause explosions and fires. Heaters with fuel leaks will be NMC until repaired. Where applicable, fuel tanks will be located outside the tents or shelters.

d. When portable space heaters are in use, fire guards will be awake and on duty. Fireguards will be effectively briefed on watch duties, emergency and fire fighting procedures, early recognition of carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide poisoning symptoms, and first aid.

8. Commanders will publish written SOPs implementing the guidance and requirements contained in this memorandum.

9. As stated earlier, this memorandum supersedes memorandum AFZF-GA-SAFE, Use of Portable Field Space Heaters, 30 Nov 01.



B. B. BELL
Lieutenant General, USA
Commanding

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1 Each III Corps MSC